



August 30, 2021

STATEMENT: SHARON LAVAGNE, PRESIDENT, RISE ST. JAMES

Hurricane Ida's Effect on River Parishes

ST. JAMES, LA - We have experienced a great catastrophe. The human suffering and physical loss cannot be measured. We are knocked down, but we are not destroyed. May God have mercy on the River Parishes and all of us affected by Hurricane Ida.

Around 10:00pm last night, my home was hit by Hurricane Ida. Hurricane Betsy did not compare to this storm. While my home appears to be totally destroyed, my family is safe.

Sometimes it seems like we cannot catch a break and we are pressed on every side. We are dealing with the burden of toxic pollution, a pandemic, the struggle for human rights, and now another natural disaster.

The writing is on the wall. Like yesterday's Hurricane Ida, major storms are approaching faster with less time to prepare. **According to Governor Jon Bel Edward's [Climate Initiative Task Force](#), 66% of our carbon emissions in our state come from industry more than anywhere else in the country. This makes storms and the climate crisis harder to bear.**

At Rise St. James we are praying for a sustainable rebuild that protects the well-being of the people and the environment. Please keep our families in your prayers. We're feeling despair throughout the River Parishes, but this too shall pass.

Sharon Lavigne,
President, Rise St. James, [2021 Goldman Prize Recipient](#)



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